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ABSTRACT

In spring 1991, a student follow-up survey was conducted to assess the reasons for students not returning to Westchester Community College (WCC) in New York. Students who had been offered financial aid and chose not to return were specific targets. Of the 196 students in the total sample, 49.0% were male, 41.3% were White, 33.27% were Black, 15.8% Hispanic, and 5.6% Asian/Pacific Islanders. A total of 99 students were reached by telephone and an additional 7 students returned a mailed survey, for a combined response rate of 54.1%. Study findings included the following: (1) 43.4% of the respondents had attended WCC to prepare for transfer to a four-year college, 34.0% to prepare for a career, and 9.4% to improve job skills; (2) 76.4% indicated that they had not achieved their objectives in attending WCC; (3) 18.9% left WCC to go to work and 17.0% to attend another college, while 13.2% could not afford to continue, and 10.4% indicated academic difficulties as their reason for not returning; (4) 33.0% did not intend to return to WCC, 44.3% intended to return within the next year, and 11.3% were undecided; (5) asked whether they were enrolled in another college degree program, 77.4% indicated that they were not, and 18.9% that they were enrolled full-time in a degree program; (6) 37.7% of the respondents were working full-time, 21.7% were working part-time, and 16% were looking for work; and (7) five services were ranked as either "very good" or "good" by 75% of the respondents: "open space on campus," "admissions," "faculty," "financial aid," and "the registrar." The survey instrument is attached. (KP)

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ED 372 782

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STUDENT FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

APRIL, 1991

Westchester Community College
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JC 940 391

STUDENT FOLLOW-UP SURVEY - SPRING 1991

A Report of Findings

Background

In Fall 1991 a student follow-up survey (Attachment A) was developed by the Office of Institutional Research in cooperation with the Dean of Students to assess the reasons for a student's decision not to return to W.C.C.

While this survey was originally intended to be sent to all non-returning students immediately upon notification that they would not be returning, it was decided to also administer the survey to a specific group of non-returning students, namely those students who had been offered financial aid for the Spring 1991 semester but had failed to return.

Methodology

In March, 1991 all of the 196 students who had been offered financial aid for Spring 1991, but did not to return, were called by phone and asked the eight questions appearing on the survey. A total of 99 students were reached by phone within three attempts. Students who were not reached were mailed the survey. After three weeks, 7 additional students returned the survey and were included in the tabulations, making a total of 106 students responding. This represents a response rate of 54.1%.

Since this survey is not a random sample, the results can not accurately be said to represent the entire population of non-returning students offered financial aid. The high response rate, however, makes the results a very good indicator.

Profile of Respondents

Of the 196 students in the total sample, 49.0% were males and 51.% females. The ethnic breakdown was as follows: 41.3% white, 33.7% Black, 15.8% Hispanic, and 5.6% Asian/Pacific Islands. The percentage of Native Americans and foreign born fell under one percent.

The demographics characteristics of the students who actually responded roughly reflected those of the entire sample both in terms of gender and ethnic background and are as follows:

Of the 106 respondents 58.5% were males and 41.5% females.

Sex of Respondents	Number	Percent
Female	44	41.5%
Male	62	58.5%

Almost half of the respondents (49%) were either Black or Hispanic.

Ethnic Background	Number	Percent
Black	33	31.1%
Hispanic	16	15.1%
White	46	43.4%
Asian/Pacific Is.	7	6.6%
Native American	0	0.0%
Foreign Born	3	2.8%
Uncoded	1	0.9%

Nearly three fifths (57.5%) were full-time students the previous semester.

Enrollment Status	Number	Percent
Full-time	61	57.5%
Part-time	45	42.5%

Nearly three fifths (57.5%) also were under 22 years of age.

Age Of Student	Number	Percent
Under 22	61	57.5%
22 to 29	27	25.5%
30 to 49	18	17.0%
50 to 65	0	0.0%
Over 65	0	0.0%

Almost two thirds (64.2%) had a grade point average of under 2.0.

Grade Point Average	Number	Percent
Over 3.0	13	12.3%
2.0 to 3.0	25	23.6%
Less than 2.0	68	64.2%

Approximately one-fifth (21.7%) of the students were enrolled in a AA degree program, two-fifths (38.7%) in an AAS program, and over one-fourth (28.3%) in an AS degree program.

Degree Program	Number	Percent
AA	23	21.7%
AS	30	28.3%
AAS	41	38.7%
CRT	5	4.7%
Not Enrolled	7	6.6%

Findings

The survey consisted of eight questions. A summary of the responses is as follows:

What Was Your Primary Reason For Attending W.C.C.?

The largest percent of the respondents (43.4%) reported that their primary reason for attending W.C.C. was to transfer to a 4-year college. Another 34.0%, however, responded that their primary reason for attending was to prepare for their first career.

Another 10% (9.4%) of the students each responded that improving job skills or personal interest was their primary reason. Preparing for a career change was not an important primary reason gave for attending. Only 3.8% selected this choice.

Did You Achieve Your Objective By The Time You Left W.C.C.?

As a follow-up to the question above, students were asked if they had achieved their primary objective by the time they left W.C.C. Three-fourths (76.4%) answered "no". Almost one-fourth of the students (23.6%), however, reported that they had achieved their objective.

Why Did You Leave Westchester?

The responses to the central question of the survey, "Why did you leave Westchester?" were scattered across the range of choices and did not result in any one reason being overwhelmingly important.

In order of importance, however, almost 20% (18.9%) responded they left "to work." Another 17.0% responded they left to "enroll in another college." Not being able to afford to continue was the main factor for 13.2%. Approximately 10% (10.4%) indicated that "academic difficulties" were their reason for leaving.

One-third responded "other" and specifically explained why. These responses were categorized into "personal or family situations" such as getting divorced, getting married or having a baby (10.4%); "becoming ill" (9.4%); or "having gotten an Associate Degree" (3.6%).

Reasons that were <u>not</u> important were: (1) Dissatisfied with Westchester (1.9%), Couldn't get into course of choice (0.9%), Moved Away (2.8%), and "Did Not Intend to Return (1.9%).

Do You Plan To Return?

Even though this group of students "dropped out" of W.C.C. for the Spring 1991 semester, only one-third (33.0%) reported that they did not intend to return later. Over two-fifths (44.3%) indicated they intended to return "within the next year" and an additional fifth (11.3%) said they intended to return "sometime." Another fifth (11.3%) reported that they were "undecided."

Are You Enrolled At Another College In A Degree Program?

Most of these students did not "drop out" in order to enroll in a degree program elsewhere? Over three-fourths of them (77.4%), stated that they were not enrolled in a degree program elsewhere.

It should be noted, however, that a small but significant percentage of students (18.9%) did report that they were enrolled full-time in a degree program at another college. An additional very small percentage (2.8%) indicated they were enrolled part-time at another college bringing the total percentage enrolled elsewhere to around one-fifth (21.7%).

Are You Currently Employed?

While a large majority of the students are not attending college elsewhere, it is apparent that they are working. Almost two-fifths of them (37.7%) reported working full-time and another fifth (21.7%) indicated they were working part-time. Another 16% reported that they were "looking for a job." Only one-fourth (24.5%) indicated they were "not available for employment."

Please Rate The Following Aspects of Your Westchester Experience

To learn whether there was any aspect of their W.C.C. experience which was particularly positive or negative and thus might influence their decision to return in the future, students were asked to rate 12 college services as either (1) very good, (2) good, (3) average, (4) poor, or (5) did not use.

Table I below summarizes in percentages their responses to each service. The following, however, are some generalizations about them:

Three of the twelve services received the top ranking of "very good" by over two-fifths of the students. They were "Open space on the campus" which 71.7% ranked as "very good," (2) the faculty which 45.3% ranked the same way, and financial aid ranked by almost two fifths (39.6%) as "very good."

Five services were ranked as either "very good" or "good" by 75% of the respondents. They included Open spaces (87.7%), Admissions (83.1%), Faculty (76.4%), Financial Aid (76.4%) and the Registrar (75.5%).

Only two services received a ranking of "poor" by more than 10% of the students. They were Food Service (13.2%) and the Bookstore (11.3%).

For nine of the services, a ranking of "poor" was given by less than 5% of the respondents.

Three services were "not used" by over one-third of the students. They were the Testing Center (40.6%), the Learning Center (34.9%), and Student Activities (36.8%).

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TABLE I

Please Rate the Following Aspects of Your Westchester Experience

Service	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Did not Use
Admissions	18.9%	64.2%	14.2%	1.9%	0.9%
Registration	15.1%	60.4%	19.8%	3.8%	0.9%
Financial Aid	39.6%	36.8%	10.4%	3.8%	9.4%
Counseling	18.9%	33.0%	25.5%	7.5%	15.1%
Food Services	4.7%	20.8%	30.2%	13.2%	31.1%
Bookstore	12.3%	43.4%	25.5%	11.3%	7.5%
Library	22.6%	38.7%	19.8%	3.8%%	15.1%
Testing Center	9.4%	29.2%	16.0%	4.7%	40.6%
Faculty	45.3%	31.1%	16.0%	3.8%	3.8%
Learning Ast.	14.2%	34.9%	11.3%	4.7%	34.9%
Student Act.	17.9%	26.4%	14.2%	4.7%	36.8%
Open Space	71.7%	16.0%	4.7%	0.9%	6.6%

Office of Institutional Research
Marcia M. Lee, Ph.D., Director
April 16, 1991

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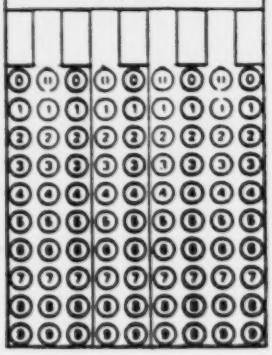
WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STUDENT FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER



Name Date

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1. What was your primary reason for attending Westchester?

Personal interest
Transfer to a 4-year institution
Prepare for a first career
Prepare for a career change
Improve job skills

2. Did you achieve this objective by the time you left Westchester?

Yes
No

3. Why did you leave Westchester? (Please choose the one best answer)

Did not intend to return
Moved Away
To enroll in an other college
To work
Academic difficulties
Could not afford to return
Dissatisfied with Westchester (please describe below)
Couldn't get into course of choice
Other (please describe below)

4. Please rate the following aspects of your Westchester experience:

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	DID NOT USE
Admissions	○	○	○	○	○
Registration	○	○	○	○	○
Finical Aid	○	○	○	○	○
Counseling	○	○	○	○	○
Food Services	○	○	○	○	○
Bookstore	○	○	○	○	○
LRC(Library)	○	○	○	○	○
Testing Center	○	○	○	○	○
Faculty	○	○	○	○	○
Learning Assistants	○	○	○	○	○
Student Activities	○	○	○	○	○
Open Space	○	○	○	○	○

5. Do you plan to return to Westchester?

Yes, within the next year
Yes, sometime
Undecided
no

6. Are you enrolled at another college in a degree program?

Yes, but not in a degree program
Yes, full-time (12 or more units)
Yes, part-time (12 or less units)
No, not enrolled

If yes, at what institution?

_____

7. Are you currently employed?

Yes, full-time
Yes, part-time
No, looking for a job
No, not available for employment

8. We would appreciate your comments about your experience at Westchester:

_____

_____

_____

_____

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